

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/681,165

Examiner

Cindy D. Khuu

Applicant(s)

SAITO ET AL.

Art Unit

2863

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☐ This communication is responsive to _____.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-10.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 09 October 2003 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 11/19/03
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-10 are allowed.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, fails to disclose or render obvious:

With respect to claim 1, a method of shutting down the steam turbine system which has been in normal operation; obtaining, after shutting down the turbine system, a first data by means of an inspecting device, the first data relating to a dimension of a crack formed in the target component part or relating to a clearance between the target component part and an adjacent component part arranged adjacent to the target component part, and wherein the obtaining step is performed when a time period in a range of 24 to 100 hours passes from the shutting-down of the turbine system, or before an atmospheric temperature of the space is lowered to 100°C.

Bauer et al (6,487,922) teach a method of inspecting a target component part of an apparatus included in a steam turbine system, the target component part (Column 3: Lines 64-65) and performed without disassembling the enclosing member and the target component part from the apparatus having the target component part (Column 4: Lines 31-32).

However, Bauer does not teach at least a method of shutting down the steam turbine system which has been in normal operation; obtaining, after shutting down the turbine system, a first data by means of an inspecting device, the first data relating to a dimension of a crack formed in the target component part or relating to a clearance between the target component part and an adjacent component part arranged adjacent to the target component part, and judging whether the target component part should be repaired upon comparing the first data with a judgmental standard, or comparing an output calculated by applying the first data to a predetermined function with a judgmental standard.

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Heald (4,680,470) teaches a method of inspecting a target component part of an apparatus included in a steam turbine system, the target component part (Column 1: Lines 25-26) and judging whether the target component part should be repaired upon comparing the first data with a judgmental standard, or comparing an output calculated by applying the first data to a predetermined function with a judgmental standard (Column 1: Lines 38-40).

However, Heald does not teach at least a method of shutting down the steam turbine system which has been in normal operation; obtaining, after shutting down the turbine system, a first data by means of an inspecting device, the first data relating to a dimension of a crack formed in the target component part or relating to a clearance between the target component part and an adjacent component part arranged adjacent to the target component part, wherein the obtaining step is performed when a time period in a range of 24 to 100 hours passes from the shutting-down of the turbine system, or before an atmospheric temperature of the space is lowered to 100°C.

Claims 2-10 are allowed due to their dependency on claim 1.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cindy D. Khoo whose telephone number is (571) 272-8585. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8:00-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Barlow can be reached on (571) 272-2269. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

cab 7/22/05


John Barlow
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 2800